SUBJECTS.

12. *Misconduct of Abkari officers.*

13. *Reduction of fee for villanga certificate.*

14. *Combination of functions of channel maramuth, water distribution and tank maramuth.*

15. *Prohibition of use of Satroms as offices.*

Mr. N. Velayudhaperumal Pillai also represented—

(1) That palm climbers were often oppressed by the subordinates of the Abkari Department who brought false charges against them and got them punished:

(2) That the fee of 25 fanams charged in the Sub-Registrars' offices for villanga certificates was excessive and might be reduced:

(3) That the functions of channel maramuth, water distribution and tank maramuth might be combined and entrusted to one Department instead of having three Departments as at present: and

(4) That Officers might be prohibited from holding their offices in public *Satroms* while on circuit and the *Satroms* made available for the exclusive use of travellers.

Dewan's reply.— The fee charged for villanga certificates is lower than in Madras. There, however, no fee is charged for certificates in respect of properties of smaller value. Government will consider whether a similar exemption could not be made here.

In regard to channel maramuth, water distribution and tank maramuth, Government will see whether the three functions cannot be combined in one Department.

The last representation will be noted for attention.

16. *Land Revenue Code Bill.*

Mr. K. K. Kuruvila (Member, Agriculturists' Association, Changanacheri) spoke on the Land Revenue Code Bill and prayed that, in consolidating and amending the Revenue laws, the policy of Government might be to preserve intact the existing rights and privileges of the ryots in regard to—

(1) the payment of tax and rent for Kanapattom lands:

(2) the assurance that no re-assessment would on any ground be introduced in the interval between two general Settlements or within thirty years from the current Settlement:

(3) coercion in default of payment of tax being confined to the amount of the defaulted instalments:

(4) the protection of the person of the landholder from arrest and imprisonment for tax: and

(5) the limitation of the powers of the Civil Court being confined to the rate and amount of taxation alone.

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SUBJECTS.

In regard to the first point, he recapitulated the observations he had recorded in the memorandum he had prepared and invited the attention of Government to the detailed exposition therein.

On the second point, he observed that sections 46, 61 and 62 of the Bill were unsuited to the conditions of the country. Technically viewed, a ryot could be prosecuted and evicted summarily from his holding for converting a *punja* land into a cocoanut plantation in the period between one Settlement and another.

In regard to the third point he said that coercive process should be confined only to the recovery of the particular instalment in arrear and that it would be hard and unjust to issue processes for the payment of instalments of tax that had not become due.

His fourth request was that the person of the defaulter should not be made liable to arrest and imprisonment for tax due on his land. The land must be made liable for the tax payable on it and not the pattadar personally, as the revenue was not personal.

The fifth and the last request referred to the limitation of the powers of the Civil Courts. He observed that the decisions of the Revenue officers should be open to the scrutiny of the Judicial tribunals and should not be made final as proposed in the Bill, except in regard to the rate and amount of taxation.

Dewan's reply.—It may be premature to express any opinion on the measure now before the Legislative Council. But, as so much misconception seems to prevail with regard to certain provisions of the Bill, it is necessary that the public mind should be set at ease in respect of one or two points. The Bill refers to Land Revenue officers and the administration of the Land Revenue and it is not intended to interfere with the existing tenures and the present system of land-holding in the country. As regards these tenures and the relation between the landlord and the tenant, it will be the policy of Government to adhere to the existing Proclamations and laws. Further, during the currency of the Settlement, the landholder will be at perfect liberty to do what he pleases with his land and it is not intended to interfere in any way with his right to do so.

17. 'Chatham' a cess not Rajabhogam.

Mr. M. Madhavan Tampi (Member, Kalkulam Taluk) said that the conversion of the *chatham* cess of three chuckrams per cottah of land into a Rajabhogam of one-eighth of the total assessment was contrary to the Royal Proclamation and prejudicial to the interests of the public. It was not known, he said, when and how the cess first

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